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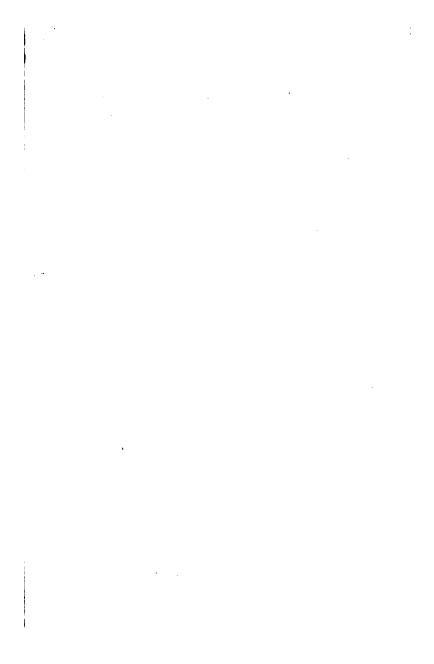
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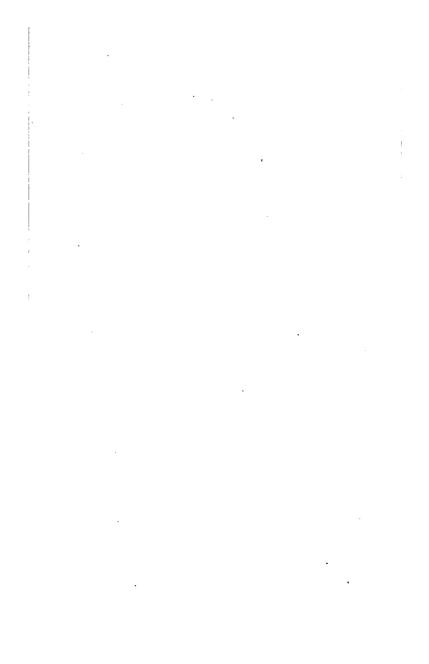
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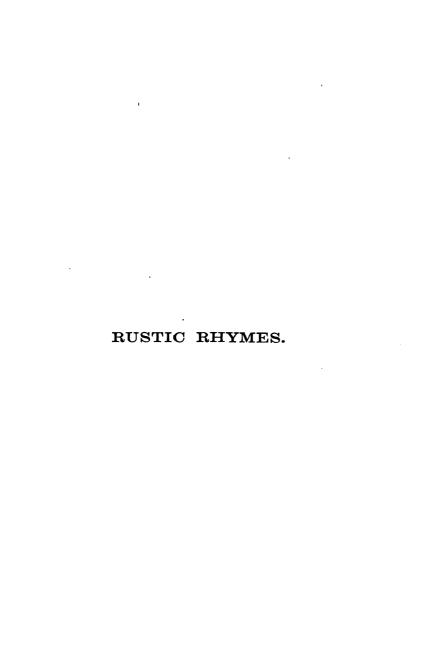


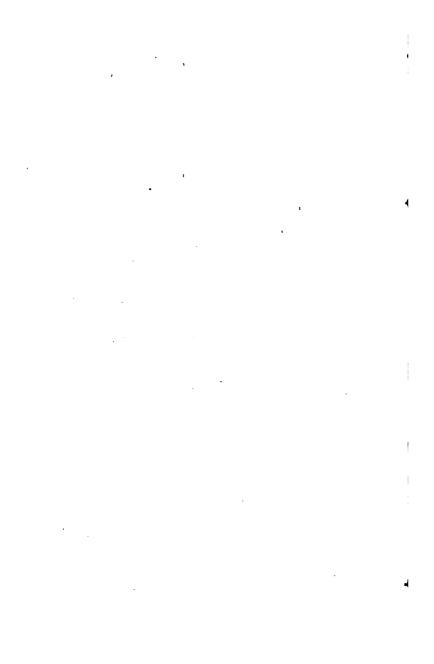












RUSTIC RHYMES.

BY

FREDERICK PRICE.

COMPOSITOR.

'I am nae fort, in a sense,
But just a reymer, like, by chance,
An' hae to learning nae pretence;
Yet, what the matter?
Whene'er my muse does on me glance,
I jingle at her.'—Burns.



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PREFACE.

In publishing the following poems I have little to say in their behalf. Nature, more than books, has been my preceptor; and I have listened to her teachings with the pure love of a sincere friend. She has been very kind to me; and if there be anything good in my warblings, she is the inspirer. I love the fields, the flowers, the brooks, and the birds, and have said so in the best manner I could.

F. P.

MAY, 1859.



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RUSTIC RHYMES.

~ CC19110100

THE CIRCUIT LANE.

How the scenes we knew in childhood
O'er the memory steal again!
An old brook, or tangled wild wood,
Or a lone sequestered lane
Oft will come again before us
Sparkling, shady, cool, and green
As when first youth's footsteps bore us
O'er the now-remembered scene.

One lane in my memory lingers
(Since 't was seen swift years have flown):
Summer's ever-bounteous fingers
Gemmed robes o'er the earth had thrown—

Emeralds and rubies blending,

Amethysts and pearls between—

And the sun and clouds were sending

Wave-like shadows o'er the scene.

By where St. Chad's turret, towering,
Rears its old and hoary head—
Furrowed by the storm's rude showering—
As a guardian o'er the dead,
Pass we to the 'Golden Meadows,'
Where blooms many a floral prize
Which in boyhood oft have led us
'Neath the spring and summer skies—

Daisy, ladysmock, and kingcup,
And the broad-leaved flag so gay,
With which we in pride would prink up
Doorsteps on the first of May—
Where bright flies their wings are sunning—
Where shells strangely marked are found—
Where the rippling brook is running
In which Bessy Banks was drowned.

Pass we these, and onward pressing

Where o'er head tall elm trees wave,

'Tween banks rich in Nature's dressing

Till we come to Bessy's grave:

Here four cross-roads meet; a green mound

Indicates her place of rest;

Few spots are more lone, I ween, found

On old England's face imprest.

Hawthorn blossoms fall and slumber
O'er where the betrayed one lies—
One more victim to the number
Sung in great Hood's 'Bridge of Sighs:'
The betrayer, in corruption,
Lies in fetid church-yard soil,
Where e'en earthworms meet destruction;
Fit 'last home' for one so vile.

Hence the lane has been neglected

From that time: the rustic swain

Since that hour the road rejected

Nor dare traverse it again.

Burdocks, thistles, nettles, tansy,

And the nightshade flourish there;
But the primrose or the pansey

Scarce are known to blossom near.

Ruts are in the ground indented,

And damp grasses o'er them spread,
Where the black newt lies contented,
And the puffed toad makes its bed;
And upon the dry banks, hiding,
Coiled up, basking in the sun,
Sleeps the spotted snake, or gliding
Our intrusive steps to shun.

Briars and brambles, interlacing,
Claim the footpath as we go,
And, with loving clasp embracing,
Clothe the rough clay banks below,
Where the roots of trees—which, spreading
High o'er head, exclude the light—
Far below the path we 're treading,
Gnarled and naked meet the sight.

Here a mass of wild profusion

Chokes the lane from side to side—
Shrubs and creepers give seclusion

In which feathered songsters hide,
And within these tangled bowers

Wondrous nests in safety build

Deep amid the scented flowers

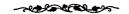
Woodbines and wild roses yield.

Now a steep-sloped hill descending
Till a brook our step impedes,
Which across the old lane wending
Hides itself among rank weeds—
Now on stones with caution stepping,
O'er the mud-fringed brook we wade,
Sometimes firmly, sometimes slipping,
Till we gain an open glade;

Here the breeze with fragrance laden
Woos each flow'ret for his bride,
Which, as would a village maiden,
Turns its blushing head aside;

'Neath our feet restharrow's flowers Gem the turf, and on the banks High the foxglove nobly towers Beauteous in its purple ranks;

Green and short the grass is springing;
Here Titania might hold court;
Distant children's shouts are ringing
Joyous in their rustic sport;
Cottages, trim garden hedges,
And the light we greet again;
All which are so many pledges
That we 're through the Circuit Lane.



THE WILLOW WREN.

O, THOU dear warbler on the wayside tree!

Art thou returned to cheer me with thy strain?

With joy again thy graceful form I see—

With pleasure welcome thy loved song again.

Though other songsters streams of music pour— The cuckoo, throstle, blackbird, and the wren, The chaffinch, goldfinch, linnet, and the lark— None more than thee may claim a poet's pen.

How thy soft warbling on this spring-tide eve Cheers the tired traveller as he toils along! E'en lovers in their converse pause awhile To listen to thy sweetly mellow song. As in this outspread beech's shade I rest,
While the last sun-rays glad my toil-strained eyes,
O sing, dear bird, thy simple plaintive lay;
Fit melody for sun-set-tinctured skies.

The 'earth stars' brightly deck the grassy fields
And fill the sir with perfume far and near;
O, that with thee I might for ever dwell
Amid such scenes, and thy loved song-notes hear!



JACK FROST.

Jack Frost, one night, left his Arctic cave,

For he wanted (he said) a change to have;

And with him went forth North Wind, his brother,
(And wondrously they 're like each other—

As much alike as a pair of bellows),

Two sharp, keen, shrewd, and biting fellows;

Lovers of mischief—topful of fun—

They never were equalled under the sun.

They came to the fields where spiders had spread On each blade of grass their gossamer thread; They sprinkled hoar rime on each filmy line Till it gleamed with gems in the pale moonshine Ere daylight had dawned, and 'dished' each spinner Out of the chance of catching a dinner;
The trees they covered, both branches and twigs,
Till they looked like judges in official wigs.

They next chained the handles of all the pumps,
The water-tanks filled with hard stony lumps,
And those who had not been careful to save
Some water o'er night were puzzled to shave.

(One good lady asked, in a voice of silk,
'Could not you, dear, make a lather with milk?'
Her husband ne'er shaved through the rest of his life
Without a sly laugh at the thought of his wife.)

Said Frost, 'As the fishes, you know, can 't roam, We 'll build them a Crystal Palace at home.'
So over the lakes and the pools they pass,
And cover them over with roofs of glass;
And grottoes they made at the falls of rills,
And miniature rocks, and mountains, and hills;
And fretwork canopies over them, placed

The birds, then, in sport, they pelted with hail,

And dropt it (for salt, they said) on each tail;

From bushes and trees they tried to displace them,

And round barns and ricks they hurried and chased them.

The robin he jerked his tail in defiance,

And would 'have his say' to their great annoyance;

But both shook their sides in merriment when

They heard the brave song of th' little brown wren.

O'er bare fields and lanes they scampered on quick,
And the sun looked black at each wanton trick,
But, heedless of all, they went on their route,
And strewed as they went the bright snow about;
And North Wind blew it through hedges and holes,
And fashioned it into white beautiful scrolls
And sculptured tombs with his chisel-edged breath
Over the flowers that slumbered beneath.

On commons and downs they covered the tracks, Made monster twelfth-cakes of the farmers' stacks, And snowballed the horses, and cows, and sheep, Till under some sheltering hedge they creep,



THE ASCENT OF LECKHAMPTON HILL, NEAR CHELTENHAM.

One summer's morn, at early day,
A solitary wight,
I went to seek for fossil shells
On old Leckhampton's height;
My 'napping hammer' and what not,
For use throughout the day,
I slung in satchel at my back,
And wended on my way,
Regaling, inhaling
The fresh health-giving breeze
From over bloomed clover
And fragrant beans and peas.

Arrived at Leck's far-spreading foot,
I tried his zigzag way,
But thinking that the sinuous path
Was cut but to delay,
I, with a light and buoyant step,
Resolved to trace a route
Which never had been paced before—
Direct, not in and out:
Elate, then, I straight, then,
My limbs brought into play
Right cheerly, till nearly
I'd conquered half the way.

And upward, onward, on and up
I mounted in my pride
Till slipping feet called on my hands
To clutch Leck's grassy side.
My walking cane (a choice old friend),
Which twice I'd nearly dropt,
And found a little in my way,
Between my teeth I popped,

And, breasting or resting,
Still upwardly I gazed,
And, wriggling and struggling,
Myself by inches raised.

The larks were soaring far beneath,
And rooks still lower flew,
And, clothed with short, dry, slippery grass,
The steep hill steeper grew;
The merry gnats danced over me,
Grasshoppers skipped before;
I thought they chirped with greater glee,
To see me 'on all four'
Extended, unfriended,
Half laughing through a sigh,
Now groaning, now crooning
'I 'd be a butterfly.'

My toes and knees, breast, elbows, nails,
Were into action brought,
And for each slight projecting thing
Within their reach they sought;

My mouth, and nose, and ears, and eyes

Were nearly filled with dust,

And as I shuffled on I feared

Some button-holes would burst;

The grass cobs and earth knobs

I met with on my road

I held on and knelt on,

And crawled, as would a toad.

Or, p'rhaps, to gazers down below,

If any watched my track,

I might a wondrous snail appear,

With 'hall' upon its back;

The cane, which 'tween my teeth I 'd placed

And still my mouth adorns,

Would seem to those beneath me as

A goodly pair of horns.

I stept on and crept on

No quicker than a snail,

And sweat drops in wet drops

Teft after me a trail.

Still slowly, onward, on and up
Toward the top I go,
Yet sometimes fear my failing powers
Will let me fall below,
Closely my mother earth I hug
With all my might and soul,
Though needing food I did n't want
A thousand feet of roll;
Besides, slung behind, hung
Wine, water, and a glass,
And cake, too; but I knew
I must not loose the grass.

By patient efforts and hard toil

I'd nearly gained the top,

When, lo! a stratum of loose soil

Appeared my course to stop.

I called Philosophy to aid,

Who soon beside me sat,

And, laughing in my face, she said,

'O what a precious flat!

Your right feet you'd fain put Into your own right hand, Believing by heaving To raise you o'er the sand!

'Don't shake your head! You can't go back!

Make use, man, of your sight!

Move sideways!' And I did, and crept

First left, and then to right;

And there I found a channel deep

Which rushing rains had cut,

Where stones projecting furnished me

With hold for hand and foot;

I grasped them, and clasped them,

And every sinew strained

By reaching and stretching,

And thus the summit gained.

My hammer soon I laid about

Stones large as cocoa nuts;

Then found with 'rare, choice specimens'

Some labourers mending ruts!

I filled my satchel, drank my wine,
And ate my cake of bread;
And coming down the zigzag path,
The thought ran through my head,—
To pleasure, or treasure,
How oft our ways are found,
Although near they appear,
To be a long way round!



SONGS OF THE FORSAKEN.

I.

How weary the days since my Jamie has left me
To wander alone on life's pitiless shore!
Of each ray of hope and of joy he 's bereft me,
And left me alone the sad loss to deplore!
O why did he seek my light heart to win from me?
O why with false vows did he wish to o'ercome me?
O why to neglect and despair does he doom me?
Why banish the peace I can never know more?

How bright were the robes of gay Nature's adorning—
The glory that shone in the star-spangled sky,
The dewdrops, the birds, and the flowers in the morning,

When, heart whole and love free, I breathed not a sigh:

But, O, how much brighter the starlight was gleaming, With far greater beauty the flowerets were beaming, O, sweet was the love-light in which I lay dreaming, When Jamie, my lover, my loved one was nigh!

How dreadful the change! In the scenes now around me

The sunlight of joy is withdrawn from my path,

The shrieks of lost Love and Affection confound me,

The flood of Affliction comes onward in wrath,

The rains of Repentance my sad eyes are filling,

The snow of Neglection my warm heart is chilling,

The shafts of Despair all my young hopes are killing,

And refuge there's none save the cavern of Death!

II.

And are you sure the news is true?

And are you sure he 's wed?

He who so long with maidens' hearts

Deceitfully has played.

O, if you 're sure the news is true,Fill me a glass with wine,I 'll pledge him and his happy bride,Though long I thought him mine.

Dear Edwin! Long I thought him mine,

When 'neath the mild moon's light

Thro' fields by spring-fed brooks we 've strayed

On many a summer night.

But, since those hours of bliss are fled,

Their loss I 'll not regret;

To know he tastes of happiness

Will give me pleasure yet.

And should I chance, in days to come,

He and his bride to meet,

With Friendship's free and open hand

The loving pair I 'll greet;

And should I hap their child to see—

Be it a lass or lad—

I 'll give the 'bairn' the smacking kiss

That I learnt from its dad.

THE TRYSTING HOUR.

The sun has gained the glowing west,

And Time has brought the wished-for hour,
The glorious woodland choir 's at rest,

And dewdrops steep the sleeping flower,
The sheath-winged beetle booming flies,
The light mist hovers o'er the lea,
The rising moon illumes the skies;
Then haste, my loved one, come to me.

The reed-bird sings his trilling strain,

The light breeze through the hawthorn sighs

And wafts rich perfume o'er the plain,

The stars shine, bright as lovers' eyes,

The brooks skip on, and clap their hands,

And sing, as children in their glee,

And wave their leaf-clad willow wands,

And, see, my loved one comes to me.

FISHING O!

Once again the Spring is here,
And the time for fishing O;
Sweetest season of the year,
And the time for fishing, O.
When the trees put on their green—
When the budding hawthorn 's seen—
There 's no sweeter time I ween
In the year for fishing O.

Come, all ye oppressed with care,
Come out with me fishing O;
Come, inhale the morn's pure air;
Come out with me fishing O;
Leave the press and leave the vice,
Let each work-worn sense rejoice,
Come, and hear kind Nature's voice
Welcome us out, fishing O.

Look out, then, your lines and hooks,

Let us be off, fishing O,

Wandering by the tuneful brooks,

Pleasant haunts for fishing O:

Violets of purple hue,

Hyacinths' sweet bells of blue,

Tipped with glistening gems of dew,

Grace our place of fishing O.

Glorious is the azure sky
O'er our heads while fishing O;
How the lark sings out on high,
As we ramble fishing O!
How the linnet, wren, and tit
By the white bloomed hedgerows flit!
How the lapwing cries 'peewit!'
As we wander fishing O.

Through the flower-clad meads we'll pass,

To our place of fishing O,

Plucking blades of curious grass

On our way to fishing O:

Resting on an o'er-arched stile, Looking on our grass awhile, We'll forget our wearying toil On our way to fishing O.

Cuckoos and the loud corncrake

Shall cheer us while fishing O;

Thrushes shall the echoes wake,

Singing to us fishing O:

Goldfinches in plumage gay,

And the blackbird, and the jay,

Carol throughout all the day,

Round about us, fishing O.

Through you leafy wood we Il go
To our place of fishing O,
Where the wild anemone's grow
In our path to fishing O;
Lilies-of-the-vale are there,
Half hid, modest, graceful, fair,
Shedding fragrance on the air
To lure us from fishing O.

Orchises and cowslips grow
All around us fishing O;
Poplars nodding to and fro
Welcome as we're fishing O,
Crab trees with their blushing flowers,
Chesnuts with their floral towers,
And laburnums yellow showers,
Gladden us while fishing O.

Insects, brilliantly arrayed,
Dancing as we 're fishing O,
With their jewelled wings displayed,
Flit by us when fishing O;
Dragonflies with dashing flight,
Blue, and gold, and emerald dight,
Add their splendours to the sight
Greeting us when fishing O.

Little shrews and newts will come Peeping at us fishing O; Rats will leave their sedgy home, Stealing by us fishing O; Perch and ruffs with spines erect, Troutlets, too, all ruby speck'd, Roach and dace in silver deck'd, Leap near to us fishing O.

What care we for golden wealth
When we are out fishing O!
Can it give us half the health
That awaits our fishing O?
Others may have hoards of gold;
Richer we, a thousand-fold,
When God's bounties we behold
Round us as we're fishing O.

Thoughts of Him who gives these joys

Fill our minds while fishing O;

Thankfulness each heart employs,

As we linger fishing O—

Thanks for sunshine, thanks for showers,

Thanks for sweetly tranquil hours,

Thanks for renovated powers,

Move our lips while fishing O.

O, ye flowers of varied hues
Springing round me fishing O,
Water-rats and little shrews
Peeping at me fishing O,
Trees and plants, birds great and small,
Fishes round the waterfall,
Insects, newts, I love ye all—
Companions of my fishing O!



A SUMMER EVENING IN SWINFEN WOOD.

THE sun has set, our daily work is o'er;
 Come, let us wander through the grassy fields,
 And leave behind us far the town's rude noise,
 And breathe the freshness which the country yields.

By hedgerows, wreathed with woodbine's scented flowers, Or through still lanes we'll pace, my love, along, Or on the border of some leafy copse We'll listen to great Nature's evening song.

How rich the fragrance of the scented hay,

The dew-steeped meadsweet, honeysuckle, rose,

The fir, the rushes, wild mint, and the fern,

Which the soft night breeze o'er our pathway throws!

Hark! From the sedgy margin of you pool first notes of the swelling hymn are heard,

And the swift echoes of this whispering wood Repeat the sweet strains of the warbling bird.

The slow-paced teamseer trolls his ballad lay,

Leading his horses to their nightly food—

The corncrake 's calling for his absent mate—

The partridge 'chirring' for its scattered brood.

The blackbird, startled by a clashing gate, Flies from her nest impetuous with fright, And hasting 'neath a sheltering hedge in fear, Drops gems of music in her hurried flight.

The sheep's soft bleatings, and the cattle's low,
And watch-dog's bark—by distance all subdued—
Creep in harmonious with the pleasing sounds
Which soothe our souls in this dear solitude.

The noble beeches of yon stately grove

Murmur their love-sighs to the wooing breeze,

Their trembling leaves all silvered by the moon,

Whose rays in beauty robe her darling trees.

The beetle, rushing on with heedless joy,
Sounding his clarion as he onward flies,
Changed from the sluggish insect of the day,
Seems wild with pleasure 'neath the star-lit skies.

And the tall pine, round which the keen-eyed bat In rapid motion seeks its insect prey, As the great leader of the tuneful choir, Seems marking time with every waving spray.

The wild duck, fluttering o'er the sleeping pool,

Strikes glistening wavelets, fringed with th' moonbeams'

light;

And moths sport joyously on pencilled wings, Like festive fairies on some hallowed night.

O thou great God, the giver of this bliss, Here let me thank Thee for this peaceful hour, And join with these thy creatures in thy praise, And tell to all thy wondrous loving power.

ASTON'S OLD HALL.

Tune .- 'The Wooden Walls of old England.'

WHEN old England's good Queen lent her presence to save

The famed Hall of Aston, then claimed as our own, To Birmingham's sons she high praises then gave Who such an example to others had shown.

Shall it, then, e'er be said we received undeserved The praise of our Queen? O, Birmingham, never! Our honour's imperilled; THAT must be perserved, And Aston's old Hall shall be ours yet for ever!

Shall the axe at the roots of those trees e'er be laid— Unrivalled for beauty in Britain's fair isle— Beneath whose green boughs we in summer have strayed And breathed the pure air in our leisure from toil? Shall that mansion whose grandeur has long been our pride

Be laid in the dust? O, working men, never!

From the gains of our toil we the means will provide,
And Aston's old Hall shall be ours yet for ever.

Here 's a health to the Queen and our friends for their aid—

Their wealth and their time—Aston's glories to save;
And success to the men who such zeal have displayed
That still in their beauty those old trees may wave;
May the turf still be pressed by our children's glad feet,
Prosperity follow each earnest endeavour:
Then, huzza, working men, we will know no defeat,
And Aston's old Hall shall be ours yet for ever.

GRANDPA'S STORY.

COME, dear grandpa, tell a story; Let it be both good and long.
You once promised that you 'd tell me
What you did when you were young.'

On a time once—'That 's it, grandpa!

That 's how all good tales begin;
Go on, grandpa; I'll be quiet—

Will not even drop a pin.'

On a time I was a baby—
'You, grandpa! But I wont speak.'
Yes, my pet, 't was so they tell me,
And, they say, was very weak.

Mother took me to a doctor—

Doctor Garlick—of great fame—

No, my dear, I am not joking;

Doctor Garlick was his name.

I 'd no appetite, she told him:

What he did I never knew;

But from that time forth, she told me,

I consumed enough for two.

'Go on, grandpa!' One day I was
Standing on the window-seat,
And I saw a man—'t was dog days—
Sent to shoot dogs in the street:

One he aimed at, his gun missed fire,

And he came near where I stood;

Bang! the charge came thro' the window,

Shattering glass, and lead, and wood,

Crash into a corner-cupboard, Broke the chinaware and delf, Scattered glass in face of mother, And swept clean the mantel-shelf.

Nearly in a line was brother

Charles upon his father's knee,

Henry near them; but all of us,

Luckily, came off shot free.

- 'What a wonder! Did you know him?'
 Hitchens was his name, my dear.
- 'Was 't in this town?' No; in Lichfield.
 'Shoot dogs in the street! How queer!
- 'Go on, grandpa!' One day mother
 Sent me upstairs in a 'twink,'
 I 'd done something to displease her—
 Loitered o'er some task, I think:

In the room there was a cupboard,
And in that a basin stood,
Filled with brimstone and with treacle,
Which folks say do children good.

'Stead of poring o'er my task book,

I must search that cupboard through,
And I ate up all the treacle,
And I ate the brimstone, too.

'What a naughty boy you were, then,
So to give your mother pain!'
P'rhaps I was, pet, but I never
Did that basin touch again.

What next, grandpa!' Next came school days,

Days of care to girl and boy,

But to man and woman oft they

Give forth dreams of mirth and joy.

On the Wednesdays, after dinner—
Glorious half-holiday—
Off into the fields I 'd ramble
For some merry game of play.

O, the bright, bright month of AprilMonths of May, June, and July!

Then, in groups, through fields we'd loiter, Or among the deep grass lie,

Gather sorrel till our small hands
Dropped it as we gathered more,
Seek for curious moss-wove birds' nests,
Or the 'Circuit Lane' explore,

Where restharrow and the foxglove,
And the starry strawberry 's seen,
And the arum's 'lords and ladies'
Wrapped up in their robes of green.

Sometimes, on the Marsh, at Freeford, Get, for arrows, straight reed stems; Or would make smart caps of rushes, And weave in bright flowers for gems.

Proud as our good queen, Victoria,

When she wears her crown, may be,

When we wore those caps, more happy,

Prouder, far more proud were we.

Seldom 'neath a cap of rushes

Are the cares and troubles found

Which the head knows when the wearer

Is with gold and jewels crowned!

By canals and streamlets, fishing,

Many peaceful hours I 've spent,

When the tuneful notes of song birds

With the low of herds were blent.

Some may praise a bird's rich plumage,
But who ever yet could trace
Plumage in a bird more brilliant
'Fhan the scales of roach or dace?

See the roach's sides of silver,

And its gold-encircled eyes,

And its back of shaded green hues,

As it on the short turf lies!

Than the gudgeon, what form ever Can more nice proportion show! What more beauteous than the minnows

As with varied tints they glow!

What more noble than the perch are
In their scaly armoury,
Roaming like old knight-companions—
Spears erect—bold, brave, and free!

Than the ruff is, what more valiant!

Spirit great in tiny size!

When 't is captured, how defiant

With gill-covers, fins, and eyes!

O, my darling, there 's great beauty
In all God-created things—
In all fishes, trees, and insects—
All that creep, or mount on wings.

These, and bandy, cricket, bathing,
Hoop, and football, tick and touch,
Running races round the Minster,
Found all summer none too much.

'Grandpa, will you get some rushes
And make such a cap for me?

I should like to have and wear one,
And be from all trouble free.'

"T would be useless did I do so—
Useless as a wreath of thorn:

By you must each rush be gathered—
By yourself be wove and worn.

'Go on.' Autumn, by the hedgerows
Wreathed with briony and hop,
And convolvulus, and woodbine,
Festooned to the very top,

Found us nutting, seeking bees' nests,
Wasps' nests, snail shells, crabs, or sloes,
Or for any gift that Nature
In the way of schoolboys throws—

Dark red haws, and hips of scarlet, Treats as great as jam pots yield; But the prize above all prizes

Was a rich Swede-turnip field!

Hungry, thirsty, heated, toil-worn,
Here 's a glorious banquet laid!
Seizing on its golden treasure,
Who can wait for opening blade!

Knock the root off 'gainst a gate post—
Peel it with your teeth and nails—
Gnaw the holes out that are in it—
Never think of grubs or snails—

Bite it, hug it, gnaw it, crunch it!

Was there ever such a treat!

Better far than any pudding!

O, how juicy, crisp, and sweet!

'Grandpa! grandpa! listen to me:

Ar' n't Swede-turnips hard and strong?'

Well, my pet, perhaps they are now,

They wer' n't to me when I was young.

Then the bramble's much prized berries—
Best when grown by pool or ditch—
Oft would fill our hats and pockets;
Black, red, green, no matter which.

If belated, fearing mother

Would be cross, I 'd armfuls take

Of the woodsage or wild tanzy—

Wondrous herbs 'gainst pain or ache!

But one evening I remember

Going through a field of corn

When each 'ear' was filled with moisture,

And the path but little worn;

O'er that path each 'ear' was bending,
As a sullen child appears,
And as I passed, homeward wending,
Dabbed and drenched me with its tears.

I swung and wrung my hat and 'pinna'—
Wiped my shoes—tried every trick:

Even tanzy could not save me,

And that night I 'got the stick.'

'Grandpa, when we go to Lichfield,

If the rushes are not gone,

Will you teach me to weave rush caps?'

Yes. 'O, thank you; now go on.'

Oft by Barrowcop I 've wandered
With young lasses three or four,
And there made my little Sally
Whistles from the sycamore;

And the finest crabs and flowers,

Nuts and sloes—gifts culled with care—

And the firmest wild rose blossoms

Fell to little Sally's share.

'My share, grandpa!' No, no, darling;
'I' was some forty years before
You came, with your light form adding
One more to our fairy store.

'Ah, then, I know; 't was your sweetheart!

Tell me, what dress did she wear?

Was she pretty? Did you love her?

Was she dark? or was she fair?

'Was she short, or tall? And was her
Hair like mine, or dark, or red?—'
Hair red! No, child! 'T is past bed-time:
Kiss me, darling. Now to bed.



THE WIND.

THE wind, the rude wind, has come out in high glee;
A boisterous, mischievous fellow is he
As ever was juvenile just home from school,
Whom father, nor mother, nor master can rule:
Through keyholes a stream of low wailings he pours,
He rattles the windows, he clatters the doors;

With clamour and din He tries to get in,

As if for a wager which he means to win; Then sits on a chimney top, driving the smoke Straight into the faces of fire-loving folk.

Round castles and churches he revels in power,

Through doorways and loopholes in turret and tower;

He makes the old weathercock grind its own rust,

And throws in the eyes of bystanders the dust;

He howls in the lobbies; then, never at fault, Leaves turret and tower for cellar and vault,

And there sighs and moans
In deep hollow tones,

Like a ghost that 's deploring its unburied bones, Or guarding its treasure, which any child knows Is hidden in heaps where a ghost shows its nose.

A weary foot wanderer 's rare fun for him,

And if 't is a lady, the more to his whim—

Her shawl, cap, and bonnet he 's sure to displace,

And with her limp curls how he tickles her face!

And, O, if a man who is pursy and fat,

What sport 't is to make him run after his hat!

Then branches he 'll poke
From chesnut and oak,
And scatter them wide as a capital joke,
And hurl the loose slates from a roof in his glee,
Then whistle the chimney as boys do a key.

Poor mariners, too, he 's delighted to tease— To see them come forth like a bevy of bees Whose nest's been disturbed; in the rigging he sings—
Their sails and their ropes in confusion he flings;
And if a mouth opens lost breath to regain,
He pops in and whistles a right merry strain;

The waves and the spray Rush out of his way,

And throw themselves prone on the sands of the bay; Or headlong they dash at the rocks with a bound, Like a flock of scared sheep from the chase of a hound.

He howls at the miser who 's counting his hoard—
He wails with the lassie whose lover 's 'on board'—
The dry leaves he scatters like snow in a storm—
And fills with dismay the poor hare in its form;
He rustles the reeds round the moorhens and coots—
He shakes the stout trees till he loosens their roots—

He brawls in the porch
Of an ivy-clad church—

He ruffles the tresses-like twigs of the birch—
He gives a brisk whirl to the sails of a mill—
Then starts with a laugh and a whoop o'er the hill.

ANTICIPATION.

TO MINNIE.

THE Spring is coming fast, dear Min.,
The flowers will soon appear:
I think they will be brighter than
In any former year.
And can you guess the reason, Min.,
Why I so much rejoice?
T is that in spring I am to wed
The dear one of my choice.

O, will it not be sweet with him

To see the flowerets grow?

I think they must be lovers, Min.,

They kiss each other so,

And are so full of happiness,

Each with its dew-wet eye,

They seem, like me, half weeping, dear,
With love's excessive joy.

O, yes, it will be beautiful—
The sun-lit sky above,
The little birds all caroling
Their heart-felt notes of love,
The guileless lambs at play beside
The brooklets running clear!
The spring is coming fast, dear Min.;
I wish that it were here!

And should our sky be overcast,

And coming storms portend,

We 'll join our hands the firmer, and

Each prove to each a friend,

And closely walk in Duty's path,

In th' faith which love imparts;

Then, though the storm may bow our heads,

'T will more unite our hearts.

The Spring is coming fast, dear Min., The flowers will soon appear;

I think they will be brighter than In any former year.

And now you know the reason, Min., Why I so much rejoice:

'T is that in spring-time I 'm to wed The dear one of my choice.



THE REALITY.

I.

The sun is unveiled in the sky,

And gilds the hill tops with his beams,
And on the glass-like pools they lie,
And glisten in the running streams:
But 't is not with their wonted light;
Cheerless and cold they seem to be.
To other eyes they may be bright;
But, O, they are not so to me!

And the few flowers the autumn yields

Bow down their heads, with moisture filled—

Alike in gardens and in fields,

They seem by Sorrow's sadness chilled:

And yet the ever-toiling bees

Around the drooping petals play:

The fragrance may their senses please;

To me they breathe but of decay.

And on the mountainash's spray

The robin strains his ruddy breast,

And tries his wonted plaintive lay,

Then ceases, as by wo oppressed.

The sun, the flowers, the robin's song,

And all bright things appear defiled:

With grief-pressed powers I move along—

For Death has snatched away my child.

П.

The swallows round my dwelling flew,
Though 't was a cold, ungenial day,
And all was wrapped in heavy dew;



And in the morn, when I awoke,

The swallows on their way had sped:

And in the morn, ere daylight broke,

My loved one's gentle spirit fled.

Say, had those birds their flight delayed

To those bright climes they love so well,

My loved one on her way to aid

To realms of gladness? Who shall tell!

Like them, she loved the joyous spring—

Like them, in freedom loved to roam—

Like them, her soul has taken wing

To find a more congenial home.

A few short hours before she went

Her Father took beneath his care,
In heaven, her first-born innocent—

Too frail a flower to flourish here;
And her pure soul its duty knew

Full well, nor wished to linger here;
With new-found mother love she flew

To nurse her baby infant there.

And when the hours bring back the spring,
The swallows will return again,
And on my roof may rest and sing,
And nestle o'er my window pane:
But she 'll not stay away till then,
But in each bird, and brook, and tree—
Each bosky wood and flower-clad lane—
In memory—she 'll be with me.



THE GIRL AND THE BROOK.

TO MY GRANDDAUGHTER.

A LITTLE girl sat by a brook, one day,

And, hearing it sing, she thought it at play;

And said, 'Little brook, will you rest awhile,

And play with me 'neath the tree by the stile?

We can watch the birds and can hear them sing,

And look at the butterfly's painted wing.'

'O, no!' said the brook, with a cheerful smile,

Though I gaily sing I 'm at work the while.'

'What have you to do?' 'I 've fishes to feed;

To carry and sow some watercress seed;

I have sand to get for the caddis worm

To make him a coat ere he can become

A merry May-fly; and close to my brink I have shallows to make, where the birds may drink. I have stones to place where the crawfish breeds, And some mud to lay at the roots of reeds; Some lime to leave where the water snail dwells, With which he will make his beautiful shells; I 've drains to receive, and a pool to fill 'To move the large wheels of a water-mill: To water the sheep, and horses, and cows; And to kiss the tips of the willow's boughs-For I have loved him and he has loved me From the earliest days of our infancy; To sing to the flowers which nod in the grass And give me a smile as I onward pass; To water the birch, and alder, and rose, And to sprinkle spray where the lichen grows; 'I 've to get-' And here the brook turned her head And her face went pale, and then became red, For the poor little thing was much dismayed To see the sad ruin its gossip had made; And she said-'Ah! do but look, little maid I 've wasted my time, and my work delayed!

The fishes all lie quite dry on the sand; The reeds are so faint they scarcely can stand; The crawfish has crept to the top of a stone, In wonder to see where I can be gone: The caddis is crawling half baked in the sun, And the water snail, too, for its shell 's not done; And the willow droops with a sorrowful bend, And sighs o'er the fault of its thoughtless friend. The flowers bow down and their petals sheed, And I 've lost, I declare, the watercress seed; The mill, too, has stopt, and the miller, I see, Has come in a fright to look out for me, And shades his eyes as he stands at his door— He ne'er knew me stop on my way before. O, how I must run my work to get through! And there 's work at home now waiting for you. T is a shame to us to be loitering here: I'm off, and you'd better go, too, my dear.'

The brook went on its way,

And from that very day

Never stopt to talk with a girl at play.

THE SWALLOWS ARE COME.

TO THE SAME.

THE swallows, my darling, the swallows are come, O'er land and o'er sea, from their far distant home! Come, wrap yourself up, and, though the air 's cool, We 'll welcome the swallows again to the pool. We 'll stay not by hedges in newly donned green, Nor yet where the robin's snug nest may be seen; But straight to the banks of the pool we will roam: The swallows, my darling, the swallows are come!

See, see how the tips of their pinions they lave,
As they stoop at the gnats which ride on the wave,
And show their dark wings and their bosoms of white
As backward and forward they dart in their flight!

How joyous—how gladly they sport with the breeze!

Now low on the water—now high o'er the trees;

And some are up high as the church's old dome,

All merry, as we are to see they are come!

And now round the pool, 'neath the alders, we'll stray,
And thank our kind Father for this pleasant day;
'T is He guides the swallows long miles o'er the sea,
Delighting the minds both of thee, love, and me.
I'll light my tobacco and rest on this stile;
You may seek for a pretty ringed snail-shell the while;
And when you have found it we 'll hasten back home,
And tell your dear mother the swallows are come.



APRIL.

SEE, she comes, a joyous maiden With hope, love, and promise laden! In her hand she 's waving, merry, Budding sprigs of sloe and cherry, Hawthorn, hazle, crab, and willow, And the palm embossed with yellow. Sweet the wreath her brow incloses-Periwinkle, and primroses, Anemones, and cuckoo flowers-Twin children of the sun and showers. Briskly onward she is tripping, And before her lambs are skipping, And the streamlet whirls and dances Playfully as she advances; O'er her head the larks are soaring, And sweet melody are pouring Forth in song, each other wooingLinnets warbling, ringdoves cooing;
Swallows darting—insects humming—
Spread the news that she is coming.
Sunlight now her face is dressing—
Now shade, as though fears were pressing
Winter would, if now returning,
Harm her pets and cause her mourning;
She wraps them in a warm caress,
Then weeps to see their happiness.
Where fall her tears a richer greening
Grass, and moss, and plant is seen in;
Where she gives her sunny kisses
Flowers appear in gayer dresses,
With their buds half open, peeping
Like arch children acting sleeping.

O! she is a peerless maiden,
With hope, love, and promise laden!
Come, my love, come forth to meet her,
And with heartfelt welcome greet her;
Come, haste, my love, she cannot stay;
She goes to meet her sister May.

AUTUMN.

From harvest fields loved Autumn paces now With floral chaplets on her brunette brow; Convolvulus, and scented woodbines rare, And poppies mingle with her auburn hair; A robe of shaded ever-varying brown From her fair shoulders to her feet falls down: A burnished girdle clasps her well-formed waist, On which vine leaves and purple grapes are traced; And in her hand she bears full ears of corn, And radiant smiles her glowing face adorn. Close on her footsteps comes a goodly train:— A wagon loaded till it groans with grain; On sprigs of dark-leaved oak, which grace the team, In chequered cups the golden acorns gleam; Next a glad troop of merry children come, Raising their joyful song of 'Harvest Home!'

One a full bough of sun-streaked apples bears, Another holds a branch of luscious pears; This bears aloft the plum tree's purple fruit, That a great treasure in the mangold's root With verdant crown; and others onward bring Chesnuts, hops, filberts, or some minor thing. And from the sumach, with its berries red, A wreath is bound around each youthful head. And now a group of men their joy proclaim, And come well laden with a store of game: Two stalwart fellows bear between them slung A dappled buck, by feet and antiers hung; Hares, pheasants, partridges, from field and brake, And fish and wildfowl, from sea, pool, and lake, Grouse, golden-plovers, ptarmigan, and quail, And the prized moorcock, woodcock, snipe, and rail The others bear; and Autumn, as she goes, These gifts with lavish hand around bestows.

THE EMBLEMATIC CHARM.

You would know why this charm is worn—
War's emblems—on the neck;
Then listen, and I 'll tell the words
In which, to me, they speak:—

The noisy cannon, gun, and drum

May fill us with alarm;

But, oh! loud, harsh, and angry words

More potent are for harm;

An unkind look from those we love—

A cold sarcastic word—

Give wounds more hard to heal than those

Of bayonet or sword:

The flags, which here in friendship group,
Once hostile armies graced;
Yet, by kind acts and generous deeds,
Their anger is effaced.

Then ever as this charm you view,

Kind looks and mild words blend;

So shall you find each friend more true—

So change each foe to friend.



WINTER.

Now, again, old Winter's with us,
Wrapped in crystal robes of snow,
With his wonder-working fingers
Pressing hard the earth below,
Turning flowing pools to rock-work,
Binding brooklets in their flight,
And bright sparkling star-gems setting
On the ebon brow of night,

While the moonlight's beams are spreading
Light along the azure sky—
Soothing the sad heart of sorrow
With their calm tranquility—
And the darkling tree-formed shadows
On the whitened flooring fall,
Graining it, as is the marble
Of some fabled Eastern hall.

Now the tress, of leaves denuded,

Clad in russet fringed with white,

Sigh and seem for ever moaning

For the Spring of life and light—

For the cheering lays of song birds—

For the grass, and for the flowers—

For the softly-breathing south wind—

For the warm sun's quickening powers.

Icicles, in threads depending

Here and there from spreading bough,
Show like those blue veins remembered

On my loved and lost one's brow.

Bright and fair that brow was ever,
Pure her mind as snow can be,
And her joyous voice the echo

Of a kind heart's minstrelsy.

This morn 'robin,' from the branches,
Scattered down the snow in spray,
And his sweetly mellow carol
Sung to chase the gloom away;

Mid the bushes, berry laden,
Many a warbler's voice was heard
In its twittering accents telling
God feeds e'en a trusting bird.

List to them, my toiling brothers—
'To the birds on briar and thorn—
Listen! and our Father trust in;
He will shield you night and morn.
Think not grasping from each other
Ever will enhance your store;
Trick-won wealth will want His blessing,
Fleet away, and leave you poor—

Poor in mind, and poor in purse, too—
Poor in your own self-esteem—
Poor in the esteem of others—
Poor when wrecked on Time's dark stream—
Poor in friends when friends are needed—
Poor abroad, and poor at home—
Poor in hope when this life 's closing—
Poor in that which is to come.

Winter's hours are not eternal;
Soon the warm sun and the rain
Will come forth, and plants and flowers
Bloom, and bless the earth again—
Again the rippling brooks be flowing
Through the fields, by wood and dell,
In melodious murmurs saying,
'Hope, and trust God—"It is well!"



TO MY WIFE.

ON NEW YEAR'S DAY.

Accept, mine own love, this first day of the year,
This tribute of love from my pen;
Though rude and unlettered, 't is truly sincere
As the first vows I breathed to thee, when,
Nigh forty years since, I first saw thy dear face,
Thy bright eyes and thy love-beaming smile,
Where truth, love, and kindness ever had place,
And I knew thy pure heart free from guile.

Yes, forty long years, as a maiden and wife,
I have known thee, and this I proclaim—
No action of thine through these days of my life
Have I ever had cause, love, to blame;

When life hath been clouded by sorrow and care,
Thou hast striven those clouds to dispel—
Hast ever been anxious those sorrows to share,
And concealed thine own cares, too, as well.

God bless thee, and may the new year that now dawns
Be as bright, love, as those which have passed,
Though darkly it opens; some black cloudy morns
Are oft blest with the sun's rays at last;
God bless thee for all the pure love thou hast given
To me as we 've travelled through life;
God bless thee, thou choicest of gifts from kind heaven—
God bless thee, mine own loving wife!



TO AN INFANT.

LITTLE stranger, welcome here! Coming in the winter drear, As the snowdrop thou shalt be, Speaking to us hopefully.

May thy spring of life be gay
As the bird's and bee's in May—
Bringing love, foretelling worth,
Blest with rosy health and mirth.

Mayst thou, when thy summer reigns,
As the sun which cheers the plains,
E'er a source of joy be found
To thyself and all around.

Shouldst thou e'er thy autumn see, Full of good fruit mayst thou be— Full of wisdom—full of truth— Innocent as in thy youth.

Then though winter on thee press
Thou It not shrink from his caress—
He will only lead thee, love,
On to peace and joy above.



TO MY BROTHER.

DEAR CHARLES,—'T is wet: no walk to-night:
So, while o'er head light clouds are curling
From out my pipe, to thee I 'll write,
My thoughts into a jingle twirling.

How oft the early days of spring

Have found us, where I 'm often wishing

To be again—where linnets sing—

Down by the rippled waters, fishing;

Where toward the sky the lavrock flies,

And where the merry thrush is singing;

Where Flora's pets in varied dyes

Their sweetness to the breeze are flinging;

Where round about the cattle low;
Where Nature's choir their joys are telling;
And where the babbling streamlets flow,
The concert with their music swelling;

Beside the little wood, my boy,

Where by its arts the ringdove drew us

Far from its young, with tricks so sly

That fairly in amazement threw us—

The dragging wing—the limping gait—
The flutter as of flight despairing—
The sudden start with strength elate—
And then the flight that left us staring!

There many a little fish we 've caught!

How was 't we always missed the great ones?

Our lines were thick enough for aught;
'T is true our rods were not quite straight ones;

Our baits——But never mind, old boy;
All 's for the best; perhaps the great ones

Would not have been so good to fry,

And 'little fish' we know 'are sweet ones.'

So it has been through life with us!

We 've caught small fish in Fortune's river;

None of which we might make a fuss;

Yet such as make us thank the Giver.

We never fished Life 's higher streams,
Where swim and float those glittering prizes,
Of which Ambition hourly dreams,
And at which many a gudgeon rises—

R—p—ths, and P—ls, and F—ntle—s,
Those blooming pinks in Fashion's posies—
Who rise and gorge at Splendour's flies,
Till they find hooks fast in their noses:

And when they 're pulled from out their stream,

Those who admired them most, deride them,

Such mean and worthless fish they seem;

as the water, lad, that magnified them.

No parks—no great estates are ours;
"T is rich ones own, plant, and contrive them:

WE see them—THEY can do no more;
I would not of an inch deprive them.

Their gardens, lakes, and works of art—

Their shelves with books arranged along them—

Are glorious things, and, for my part,

I sometimes wish to be among them:

But as we ramble by some brook,

And on the flower-strewn turf we 're treading,

'T is then we open God's own book,

Which well repays a careful reading.

Just think how we should feel if we
Were drawn along in four-horse coaches—
Bothered with servants two or three—
When we went catching ruffs and roaches!

'T is sweeter far, to us, to go Through lanes and fields on 'Shanks's ponies,' With Peace, and Love, and hearts a-glow, And blessed Contentment for our cronies.

Then, here 's 'Thy health!' thou dear old chap
(I wish that I could hear thee speaking!),
And as I have 'anither drap,'
Here 's 'To all friends around the Wrekin!'



TO MY SISTER.

'T is Christmas Day, my sister dear,
When hall and hut, love, should be merry,
With leving mirth, and right good cheer,
And juices of the vine's rich berry;
And peace and love should aye abound—
For life and all life's joys are fleeting—
So, while good wishes pass around,
Thou shalt not want one earnest greeting.

'Peace upon earth—goodwill to man'
We should promote, dear, at this season;
Who will not do so all they can
Must be devoid of love and reason:

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WHEN WINDS ARE LOUD.

WHEN winds are loud on Winter's night—
When snow-flakes clothe the leafless trees—
When clouds obscure the moonbeams' light—
When frosts the trembling waters freeze—
A glowing fire, the crickets' lay,
A curtained room, and books at will
Are cheering things; but tell, I pray,
What is far more cheering still?

When spring appears—when hawthorns bloom,
And grace the hedgerows with their white—
When children through the meadows roam,
And gather wild flowers with delight—

When fields are jewels set in green—
When swallows skim the pool and rill—
They form a gay—a joyous scene;
But there is that more joyous still.

When summer with the smiles and tears

Of spring makes gems to grace her vest—

When with its song the throstle cheers

His mate while brooding on her nest—

When every bird, to feed its young

Finds full employ for wing and bill—

Then deeds of kindness round us throng;

Yet there is one thing kinder still.

When autumn reigns—when men, and bees,
And ants are blessed with plenteous stores
From harvest fields, and flowers, and trees—
When barns are filled up to the doors—
When berried fruits the hedges grace
Where Nature's pets may feed at will—
God for these precious gifts we praise;
Say, what is far more precious still?

A good wife's smile 's more cheering
Than fire or books can be—
Her sparkling eyes more joyous
Than spring's gay scenes to me—
Her love-warm heart hath kindness
Far more than summer knows—
And she 's the far most precious gift
That Heaven on man bestows.



SONG.

SUNG AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE TYPOGRAPHICAL.
SOCIETY.

Tune—'Steady, boys, steady!'

Again we are met round the gay festive board,
And the song of good humour and harmony 's heard;
With 'cases' well 'filled' with the best of good cheer,
We'll 'drive out' old Care for one night in the year.
Then fill to the brim, and let this the toast be—

With cheers and a bumper—
'The friends of a Press that 's unfettered and free!'
Then fill, &c.

Go, search where you may, if the Press is in chains, "T is there uncontrolled that fell Tyrany reignsThe people degraded in mind and oppressed,

Their rights all invaded, their wrongs unredressed.

Then fill to the brim, and let this the toast be—

With cheers and a bumper—

'The friends of a Press that 's unfettered and free.'

Then fill, &c.

But where 't is enfranchised the people are free

As the air which they breathe, ay, and ever shall be;

A free Press hath taught them their just rights to gain—

A free Press will aid them those rights to maintain.

Then fill to the brim, and let this the toast be—

With cheers and a bumper—

'The friends of a Press that 's unfettered and free.'



BELLS.

Sweetly, sweetly sound the bells!

Over hill and over dale

Their delightful music swells,

Bearing many a varied tale.

Sadly, sadly, tolls the bell,
Filling leving hearts with gloom—
Sadly, deeply strikes its knell
When a friend is carried home.

Joyous, joyous clang the bells,
Telling of a victory won,
To some ears—to others tell
Of lost husband, father, son.

Cheerly, cheerly out they ring

For the newly wedded pair—

Promised happiness they sing—

All that's glorious—all that's fair.

Merry, merry bells!

O! how welcome is your chime

Where kin meet and friendship dwells

At the merry Christmas time.



THE WATERCRESS BROOK.

Come, come, dearest Nancy, the gay morn 's advancing,
The night and her train their departure have took;
From over the church elms the sun is just glancing,
And Nature, kind Nature, put on her best look.
The skylark above us in freedom is winging,
His first hymn of joy to the morning he 's singing,
And sweet is the incense the light breeze is bringing:
O, come, and we 'll stray by the watercress brook.

I 'll show where the meek little primrose is peeping—
O, well I remember from boyhood the nook—
'T is where with green garlands the fond ivy 's creeping

To grace the bold brow of her lover, the oak-

- Where birds from their slumbers the flow rets are starting,
- With eyes moist, like maidens' from love dreams of parting—
- Where arrow-swift minnows are vividly darting Along the pure stream of the watercress brook.
- 'Midst you clump of rushes the stream has its rising—
 'T is there that the day-beam first meets its young
 look—

From there that it starts on its journey rejoicing,

A playful, a songful, and brisk little brook:

And o'er the smooth pebbles it trips along singing,

Now under an archway its ripple is ringing,

Again to the daylight 't is joyously springing,

A laughing, swift, merry, strong watercress brook.

Through gold-and-green meadows its pathway is lying,

And swallows their nests 'neath the eaves have forsook,

And over the daisies and kingcups are flying

Beside the gay banks of the watercress brook;

Away by the wood where the ringdoves are cooing,

Away where the reedbirds their love songs are strewing,

Away under bushes, its course still pursuing,

Runs on in wild glee the glad watercress brook.

The fairy lamps, still from the bushes depending,

Shine brilliant as jewels, by morning's breath shook,
And glitter awhile, o'er the loved waters bending,

Till, won by the song of the watercress brook,

Each springs with delight from its green leafy bower—

From alder, from hazle, from sedge, or from flower—

And sparkles, and drops in a diamond shower

To join in the mirth of the watercress brook.

O, sweet are the notes which the songbirds are telling!
O, sweet are the flowers on which the eyes look!
O, sweet is the murmuring music that 's swelling
Along the gay route of the watercress brook!
Yet none are so sweet as the light fairy blossom,
The hope, the delight, and the pride of my bosom,
O, list to the song of my light fairy blossom,
O, hear the child's song by the watercress brook:—

O, how bright the stars on high,
Shining nightly in the sky!
But these flowers are as fair
Which I 'm weaving in my hair.

O, how I should love to stay,

Breathing their sweet breath all day—

Weaving bracelets with the gems

And the dandelion stems!

I have heard my teacher tell

That, in large towns, children dwell

Who do n't see all summer's hours

One sweet group of growing flowers!

Were I teacher, then would I
Lead them 'neath the sunny sky
On the pretty flowers to look,
Growing by the running brook.

THE CUCKOO.

Singing over hill and dale,

Mocking cuckoo tells his tale;

And a lord-like bird is he,

Singing from some ancient tree,

'Cuckoo! cuckoo!

'I ne'er doubt my sons and daughters Finding some snug pleasant quarters; Working sparrows MUST maintain 'em, Tho' their nests will scarce contain 'em.

Cuckoo! cuckoo!

'What tho' sparrow is distressed
To find grubs to feed the nest!

His own nestlings it may starve, But he must my offspring serve.

Cuckoo! cuckoo!

'Should they press on our domain, Mine will throw them in disdain O'er the nest, nor care a curse If they starve to death, or worse.

Cuckoo! cuckoo!

' Madam Nature has decreed Sparrows shall young cuckoos feed; But I question if the plan Is appropriate to man.

Cuckoo! cuckoo!'

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